

2004 Legislative Survey

1. Do you favor a light rail system? Yes No
2. Do you favor raising taxes to pay for a light rail system?
Yes No
3. Do you favor raising excise taxes? Yes No
4. Do you favor locally elected school boards?
Yes No
5. Do you favor building a new prison on Oahu?
Yes No
6. Do you favor increasing treatment options for drug users?
Yes No
7. Do you favor stricter punishment for drug users?
Yes No
8. Do you favor any form of gambling? Yes No
9. Do you favor Physician Assisted Suicide?
Yes No
10. Do you favor legalizing Domestic Partnerships?
Yes No
11. Do you favor giving tax credits to purchasers of long-term care insurance? Yes No
12. Do you favor a gasoline price cap? Yes No

Please feel free to write down any other concerns you may have:

Please mail in this survey to: (Senator Bob Hogue, Hawaii State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania St. Room 204, Honolulu, HI 96813).

Your response is important! Thank you for your prompt reply!

Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St. Room 204
Honolulu, HI 96813



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Moving Forward Preparing for the 2004 Legislative Session



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Dear Neighbor,

Happy Holidays! Thank you again for entrusting me to represent you at the State Capitol. I've enjoyed the past three years in the legislature, and I am committed to improving public education and the quality of life for our families.

This legislative year marked the beginning of change for the better. I firmly believe that Governor Linda Lingle is doing a tremendous job of restraining state spending and setting budget priorities. Although this affects some programs, our state can no longer spend money it does not have.

I will continue working to improve our public school system, fight crime and drug abuse, and find solutions to affordable prescription drugs, long-term care, and Hawaii's high cost of living.

Your input is very valuable to me and as I prepare for the 2004 Legislative Session I would like to hear from you. Please fill out and mail in the survey I've enclosed in this newsletter.

*Mahalo,
Senator Bob Hogue*

LOOKING BACK AT 2003

With a new administration and a legislature dominated by Democrats, the 2003 Legislative Session marked the transition to a more bipartisan, two-party system. The biggest challenge was crafting the budget (HB200). I voted for this bill, which significantly cut spending from the original budget prepared by the prior governor. Governor Lingle used her line item veto power to trim spending further, ensuring a balanced budget.

I consistently voted against new or increased taxes and fees, especially the proposal to increase the General Excise Tax from 4% to 4.5% (HB510). Tax and fee increases were not needed to balance the budget, and they would have hurt our economy. We had enough revenue to finance all the core functions of state government – it is a matter of setting priorities and living within our means, just like families and businesses must do.

I opposed salary increases to all three branches of government – the judiciary, legislative, and executive branches. In particular, I opposed the proposed pay raises for legislators. We shouldn’t ask others to forego pay raises while increasing our own pay.

I strongly supported the charter school bill (SB 1700). It increased the per-pupil funding for charter schools so they don’t lag behind other public schools, and it provides some (though still inadequate) resources for special ed students in charter schools.

Special Session

A Special Session was called in July to override six of the Governor’s vetoes. With voting following party lines, this session seemed more about political grandstanding than problem solving.

Keeping the Windward Side Clean and Beautiful

In March, my office coordinated the clean up of two invasive plant species, Salvinia Molesta and Water Lettuce, from Kawainui Marsh. Mahalo to all the volunteers who pitched in! Salvinia and Water Lettuce still infest part of the marsh, but the county has continued controlling these invasive weeds by spraying a safe pesticide and removing the dead plants. I have also continued to work hard to improve our water quality on the Windward side.

LOOKING FORWARD – 2004 SESSION

Ice and Drug Task Force

Drug use plagues our state, and the ripple effect crosses all walks of life and affects every community. I currently sit on the **Joint Senate/House Task Force on Ice and Drug Abatement**. We are learning about this serious problem by attending community meetings across the state and holding public hearings with various stakeholders in law enforcement and state departments. We will be looking towards tightening up our laws as well as providing money towards rehabilitation this coming session.

Prescription Drug Task Force

I sit on a bipartisan committee that is working to alleviate the high cost of prescription drugs, especially for people who fall in the gap group, (or lower middle income levels.)

Gas Cap

The legislature enacted a gasoline price cap that is scheduled to take effect in July 2004. I voted against this cap, since the public testimony raised serious concerns about possible gas shortages or even higher prices. The study the legislature commissioned reflected these concerns and was highly critical of this cap, saying that price controls don’t work well. The proponents of this cap will try to rewrite this legislation – I expect this will be one of the more contentious issues this session.

Light Rail Transit System

Governor Lingle has expressed some support for this concept, but has acknowledged the concerns of many Republican legislators about the enormous cost of such a system. The Democratic leadership will likely propose increasing the excise tax to finance light rail. This may be the most hotly debated topic this session.

Decentralizing the School System

Governor Lingle strongly supports decentralization and locally elected school boards, and I wholeheartedly agree with her. Studies show that smaller school districts tend to have better student performance and lower costs than larger school districts.

INVITATION TO THE CAPITOL

Oftentimes the public feels out of touch with what’s going on at our State Capitol. I would like to invite you, or anyone you know of, to take a tour of the Capitol or to be recognized in front of the legislature for anything outstanding. The 2004 Legislative Session begins in January and I would like to see and recognize more of my constituents. Please feel free to call my Chief of Staff, Sam Moku, at 587-7215. He will be happy to arrange these visits. This past year we honored the 2003 State Champion Kailua High School Girls Softball Team as well as the 2002 State Football Runner up Castle High School. It was an honor to brag about our young student-athletes in front of my senate companions.



2003 Kailua High School Girls Softball State Champions



Castle High School Principal Meredith Maeda, Head Coach Nelson Maeda, Senator Melodie Aduja, Senator Hogue, Senator Norman Sakamoto, Athletic Director Richard Haru along with football players

